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Summary record of the 33rd meeting
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Chairman: Mr. Ashe ..... (Antigua and Barbuda)
Acting Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. Saha

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Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.3/60/L.15/Rev.1: Future operations of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women

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Administrative and financial implications arising from the report of the Standing Committee of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Board

The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Agenda item 124: Proposed programme budget for the biennium 2006-2007 (*continued*)

Estimates in respect of special political missions, good offices and other political initiatives authorized by the General Assembly and/or the Security Council (A/60/7/Add.24 and A/60/585)

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Administrative and financial implications arising from the report of the Standing Committee of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Board (A/60/7/Add.22 and Corr.1; A/C.5/60/18)

1. **Ms. Van Buerle** (Director ad interim of the Programme Planning and Budget Division) said that owing to time constraints she would introduce the various reports and statements of programme budget implications in one overall statement.

2. The report on estimates in respect of special political missions, good offices and other political initiatives authorized by the General Assembly and/or the Security Council (A/60/585) set out the budget proposals for 2006 for 26 special political missions emanating from decisions of the General Assembly and/or the Security Council.

3. The overall resources requested in the report amounted to $280,803,200 net, or $297,498,900 gross. Table 1 showed estimated costs per mission, table 2 summarized the aggregate requirements by major components, and table 3 provided details on the proposed staffing resources. A total of 3,085 positions were being requested for 2006, reflecting a net reduction of 266 positions resulting from the net effect of the discontinuation of six missions, the requirements for new missions and the expansion of continuing missions. The total requirement of $280,803,200 would be charged against the provision for special political missions, of $355,949,300, included under section 3 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2006-2007.

4. The report on the International Trade Centre UNCTAD/WTO (A/60/6 (Sect. 13)/Add.1) was related to the proposed programme budget for information and communication technologies (ICT) for the biennium 2006-2007. The report was being presented in accordance with the agreed arrangements contained in General Assembly resolution 59/276, under which a simplified budget was presented in the early part of a budget year and a detailed budget in the fall of the same year.

5. The budget proposals before the Committee had been approved by the General Council of the World Trade Organization (WTO) and reflected resource requirements for the International Trade Centre (ITC) of 68,369,400 Swiss francs at 2006-2007 rates. That figure represented a decrease of 13,500 Swiss francs, resulting from increases arising from the delayed

impact of posts approved in 2004-2005 and three new posts proposed for 2006-2007, offset by decreases in non-post requirements.

6. The Secretary-General's report on construction of additional office facilities at the Economic Commission for Africa in Addis Ababa was contained in document A/60/532. Parts II and III of the report provided information on the status of the project, and parts IV and V addressed the revision to the office space requirements and the corresponding cost estimates for the proposal to construct two additional floors of office space. Specific action requested of the General Assembly was contained in paragraph 24 of the report.

7. The seven statements of programme budget implications were being presented to the Committee by the Secretary-General in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly. The requirements set forth in the statements would represent a charge against the contingency fund.

8. As reflected in document A/C.5/60/22, under the terms of paragraph 1 of draft resolution A/60/L.40, the General Assembly would decide to establish the Peacebuilding Commission as an intergovernmental advisory body. Under paragraph 23 of the draft resolution, the Assembly would reaffirm the request to the Secretary-General to establish a peacebuilding support unit to assist and support the Commission.

9. The decision contained in paragraph 1 would give rise to requirements for conference servicing amounting to $2,181,600 under section 2 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2006-2007. Additionally, the costs of establishing the peacebuilding support unit were estimated at $4,175,200, under sections 3 and 35. Should the General Assembly adopt draft resolution A/60/L.40, additional resources of $7,002,400 would be required. The related detailed information on the programmatic and resource implications were presented in the Secretary-General's report on the 2005 World Summit Outcome: Revised estimates to the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2006-2007 (A/60/537), which was currently under consideration by the General Assembly.

10. Document A/C.5/60/12 reflected the programme budget implications arising from draft resolution A/C.3/60/L.17, as orally revised, on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. The requests contained in paragraphs 14, 15 and 21 of the draft resolution, which gave rise to the programme budget implications, were contained in part II of document A/C.5/60/12. Part V of the document detailed the additional requirements, amounting to $9,519,300, under sections 9, 2 and 28D of the proposed programme budget for 2006-2007, to give effect to the resolution and reduce the accumulated backlog of cases to be addressed by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women.

11. Document A/C.5/60/14 contained the programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.1/60/L.50/Rev.1 on transparency in armaments. It outlined the actions required under the terms of paragraph 4 (b) of draft resolution A/C.1/60/L.50/Rev.1, by which the General Assembly would request the Secretary-General, with the assistance of the group of governmental experts to be convened in 2006, to prepare a report on the continuing operation of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms and its further development, with a view to taking a decision at its sixty-first session.

12. Implementation of the decision would involve conference servicing for three sessions of the Group of Governmental Experts, amounting to a total $679,500, and substantive servicing by the Department for Disarmament Affairs, amounting to approximately $399,100, mainly for the travel expenses of the Governmental Experts, as well as resources for general temporary assistance and consultancy services. The total related programme budget implications were thus $1,078,600.

13. Document A/C.5/60/15 was being presented in response to the requests contained in paragraphs 35 and 43 (b) of draft resolution A/C.3/60/L.22/Rev.1 on rights of the child, adopted by the Third Committee on 18 November 2005. Under the resolution, the General Assembly would recommend that the Secretary-General should extend the mandate of his Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict for a further period of three years and request the Special Representative to continue to submit reports to the General Assembly and the Commission on Human Rights.

14. Part V of the Secretary-General's report provided details of the related administrative and financial arrangements. It was estimated that the overall requirements of the Office of the Special Representative for the biennium 2006-2007 would

amount to some $3.5 million gross. That would provide for continuation of the existing staff complement of the Office (eight posts), as well as non-post resources.

15. It was estimated that as of 31 December 2005 the balance of unearmarked voluntary contributions for the Office would amount to $152,100. Including that amount, the net additional requirements for maintaining the Office in the biennium 2006-2007 would be $3,347,800 gross ($2,890,200 net), which would need to be funded from the regular budget. The requirements for 2008 would be considered in the context of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2008-2009.

16. Document A/C.5/60/16 contained the programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.3/60/L.15/Rev.1 on the future operation of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW). By the draft resolution, the General Assembly would decide to provide its full support to the current efforts to revitalize the Institute and to provide it with the requisite funds to enable it to carry out its core functions for the biennium 2006-2007.

17. Parts IV and V of the report described the current financial situation of INSTRAW as well as the related administrative and financial arrangements and indicative additional requirements. The requirements to sustain INSTRAW operations in 2006 were estimated at $1,314,352. It was anticipated that the balance available for allocation in the INSTRAW Trust Fund as of 1 January 2006 would amount to approximately $272,200. It was not yet possible to determine whether the Institute would have adequate resources to operate up to 31 December 2006 without complementary funds.

18. Contingent upon the availability or otherwise of additional voluntary contributions, an additional amount of $1,042,200 might be required from the regular budget to maintain the Institute in 2006. At the current stage, the provision of additional funds to finance the operation of the Institute beyond 2006 would imply an annual subvention from the regular budget and was subject to the express decision of the General Assembly in that regard as well as to the amendment of article VIII of the statute of the Institute.

19. Document A/C.5/60/17 on the situation of human rights in Myanmar was related to the requirements of paragraph 5 of draft resolution A/C.3/60/L.53, adopted by the Third Committee on 18 November 2005. By that resolution, the General Assembly would request the Secretary-General to continue to provide his good offices and to pursue his discussions on the situation of human rights and the restoration of democracy with the Government and people of Myanmar, including all relevant parties to the national reconciliation process, and to offer related technical assistance to the Government. The Secretary-General would also provide all necessary assistance to enable his Special Envoy for Myanmar and the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on the situation of human rights in Myanmar to discharge their mandates fully and effectively.

20. It was estimated that in order to implement the mandates requested in the draft resolution for a period of one year in 2006, the required resources would amount to $210,400 net ($254,000 gross), for staff resources and operational expenses. Those requirements would be charged against the provision of $355,949,300 proposed for special political missions under section 3 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2006-2007.

21. Lastly, document A/C.5/60/18 contained the financial implications that would arise for the regular budget should the General Assembly adopt the recommendations submitted in the report of the Standing Committee of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Board (UNJSPB) to the Assembly (A/60/183). Based on the recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) following its review of the report of the Standing Committee, the Organization's share in the administrative and audit costs related to the Pension Fund was estimated at $16,539,800.

22. In accordance with established procedures, the overall amount would be shared among the regular budget and the funds and programmes. As reflected in paragraph 1.28 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2006-2007 (A/60/6 (Sect. 1)), an estimated 65 per cent of that amount would be attributable to the regular budget. However, based on the latest data on the number of participants in the Fund, that percentage would need to be revised to 62.2 per cent.

23. In applying the revised distribution rate of 62.2 per cent to the revised overall requirements of

$16,539,800, an amount of $10,287,800 would represent the revised regular budget share as compared to $9,208,800 already included under section 1 of the proposed programme budget, necessitating an additional requirement of $1,079,000.

24. **Mr. Saha** (Acting Chairman of the Administrative Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) introduced the statements of ACABQ on the programme budget implications of the reports introduced by the Director ad interim of the Programme Planning and Budget Division.

25. The Advisory Committee's report on estimates in respect of special political missions, good offices and other political initiatives authorized by the General Assembly and/or the Security Council was contained in document A/60/7/Add.24. In paragraph 5 of its report, the Advisory Committee expressed its concern at the submission of a proposal of such magnitude so close to the end of the year. In paragraphs 6 and 7, it recommended that the matter should be deferred pending a detailed review by the Advisory Committee of the programme and financial aspects of the proposals in February 2006 and subsequent action by the General Assembly. The Advisory Committee also recommended approval of a charge of $100 million against the provision for special political missions under section 3 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2006-2007.

26. The Advisory Committee's report on the International Trade Centre UNCTAD/WTO was contained in document A/60/7/Add.16. Paragraph 8 of the report contained details of the Advisory Committee's approval of posts. In paragraph 13, the Advisory Committee recommended that the Assembly should approve an amount of 68,369,400 Swiss francs, at 2006-2007 rates, under section 13 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2006-2007.

27. The Advisory Committee's report on the programme budget implications of the Secretary-General's report on the construction of additional office facilities at the Economic Commission for Africa in Addis Ababa was contained in document A/60/7/Add.24. Its report on the programme budget implications of draft resolution A/60/L.70, on the Peacebuilding Commission, were contained in document A/60/7/Add.25, and its report on the programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.3/60/L.17, on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, was contained in document A/60/7/Add.15.

28. The programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.1/60/L.50/Rev.1, on transparency in armaments, were addressed in document A/60/7/Add. 19; the programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.3/60/L.22/Rev.1, on rights of the child, were contained in document A/60/7/Add.18; the programme budget implications arising from the draft resolution on INSTRAW were contained in document A/60/7/Add.20; and the programme budget implications relating to the draft resolution on UNJSPB were contained in document A/60/7/Add.22.

29. **Ms. Taylor Roberts** (Jamaica), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, noted that the financial situation of INSTRAW had improved considerably during 2005 owing to the increase in voluntary contributions, which had been the largest since 1997. The Group was also pleased to note that the Institute had raised substantial extrabudgetary funds, which had greatly facilitated the implementation of mandated projects.

30. The Group appreciated the outstanding work performed by the Institute's Director, who had significantly enhanced the Institute's efficiency. It welcomed the strengthening of cooperative arrangements with other United Nations entities, such as the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), on various project proposals, including fund-raising activities, and the Institute's strategic framework for the period 2004-2007.

31. The Group noted with great appreciation the four strategic areas selected by the Director, aimed at applied research, the sharing and dissemination of information, capacity-building and the Institute's own institutional development. The Institute had also carried out research activities relating to migration, information and communication technologies, peace and security issues and, most importantly, women's empowerment and political participation.

32. The Committee would recall that INSTRAW had been mandated by Member States as the only entity of the United Nations system devoted exclusively to research, training and the dissemination of information relating to gender equality. In that context the Group called on the membership of the Organization to continue its commitment to support the revitalization of the Institute and to ensure that it could carry out its

mandate effectively. It also supported the suggestion, contained in document A/C.5/60/16, that the Institute should receive an annual subvention from the regular budget.

33. **Mr. Torres Lépori** (Argentina), speaking on behalf of the Rio Group, associated the Group with the statement made by the representative of Jamaica on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. The Group believed that the statements of programme budget implications before the Committee should be considered together. With regard to the report on transparency in armaments, contained in document A/C.5/60/14, it believed that preparation of a report on the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms was of fundamental importance and that the General Assembly should make available the necessary resources to ensure the success of the related intergovernmental working group.

34. The necessary resources should be found in the regular budget to extend the mandate of the Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict, as the Secretary-General had recommended in document A/C.5/60/15. The Rio Group welcomed the measures that had been taken to revitalize INSTRAW and noted with satisfaction that its Director had acted to strengthen the Institute and to raise extrabudgetary resources. The Assembly should nevertheless still find additional funding for the Institute.

35. The Group wished to express its support for the organizational measures proposed by the Secretary-General for the work of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and supported the various budget proposals. The Group had taken note of the recommendation of ACABQ that consideration of the programme and financial aspects of the special political missions should be deferred until February 2006.

36. **Mr. Lithgow** (Dominican Republic) said that his delegation wished to associate itself with the statements made by the representative of Jamaica on behalf of the Group of 77 and China and by the representative of Argentina on behalf of the Rio Group. INSTRAW and its Director were doing excellent work and making a significant contribution to the promotion of gender equality and the advancement of women in developing and developed countries alike. His delegation also wished to express its satisfaction with the work being done by the Institute's Executive Board, which demonstrated the interest and commitment of Member States to the Institute and the importance they attached to ensuring its continuity and stability.

37. As its host country, the Dominican Republic had continued to support the Institute, providing it with first-class premises, equipment, facilities and services of various kinds, and had always recognized its importance and its ability to carry out its assigned mandates. Despite its continued lack of resources, the Institute had fully demonstrated its importance to the gender question as well as its ability to contribute in the areas of security, international migration, governance and political participation and to coordinate its activities with other pertinent entities of the United Nations system. The Organization had a responsibility to continue providing the Institute with a permanent financial base upon which to carry out its research and promotion work, which was a basic tool for the advancement of women around the world.

38. **Mr. Yáñez** (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) said that his delegation wished to associate itself with the statements made by the representative of Jamaica on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, the representative of Argentina on behalf of the Rio Group, and the representative of the Dominican Republic. It also wished to reiterate its reservation with regard to the 2005 World Summit Outcome document, in particular the paragraphs relating to the establishment of a peacebuilding commission, because of the contradictions that had arisen as a result of a negotiation process that had been neither inclusive nor transparent.

39. With regard to the creation of a peacebuilding support office to assist the Commission, his delegation believed that the General Assembly was not in a position to consider the programme budget implications of a draft resolution that had not yet been adopted and on which the negotiations had not yet been concluded.

40. The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela had not supported the draft resolution on the situation of human rights in Myanmar for a variety of reasons. It believed that the issue of human rights should be addressed in a global context and in a constructive manner, based on dialogue and inspired by the principles of objectivity and respect for national sovereignty and territorial integrity, non-interference in

the internal affairs of States, impartiality, non-selectivity and transparency. The politicization of human rights questions was unacceptable. Developed countries claimed to be the defenders of human rights and assumed the authority of judges, even as they selectively condemned developing countries. Moreover, in 50 years no resolution condemning human rights abuses by industrialized Western States had been adopted.

41. **Ms. Udo** (Nigeria) recalled that her delegation had spoken on several occasions, on behalf of the African Group, about the construction of additional facilities at the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and had expressed concern at the numerous delays encountered by that project. On the most recent occasion, it had been assured that construction would soon be under way and it had therefore been somewhat taken aback to learn that construction had not yet begun. Her delegation would therefore be grateful for a briefing on the status of construction and the anticipated completion date. It also wished to thank the Government and people of Ethiopia for the cooperation they had provided to the United Nations.

42. **Mr. Mumbey-Wafula** (Uganda) said that his delegation attached great importance to peace and stability in the Great Lakes region and was therefore concerned at the absence of staff at the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Great Lakes Region with local knowledge of the area. He would welcome information on the efforts being made to redress that problem. His Government broadly welcomed the establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission.

43. With respect to the rights of the child, his delegation was concerned at how the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict was being run. The former Special Representative had politicized the Office and its reporting mechanism was far from accurate. Although his delegation supported the advocacy role of the Office, given the global presence and resources of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), that agency was better suited to assume its functions. His delegation therefore saw no merit in renewing the mandate of the Office.

44. **Mr. Getachew** (Ethiopia) said that his Government and the administration of the city of Addis Ababa had always worked closely with the concerned bodies towards the construction of additional office space for ECA. With regard to the additional land allocated by the Ethiopian Government to the Commission, he would welcome the latest information on the status of the relevant documents submitted to the Office of Legal Affairs. His Government would continue to do its utmost to assist in the completion of the project.

45. **Ms. Lock** (South Africa) said that while her delegation understood that the Secretariat had been working under tremendous pressure to issue the necessary documents, it was concerned that there had not been sufficient time to examine them in detail. It would nevertheless work in a constructive manner to reach an early agreement on the issues before the Committee. Her delegation associated itself with the statement by Argentina on behalf of the Rio Group concerning INSTRAW and with Nigeria, Ethiopia and Uganda concerning construction of additional office facilities at ECA.

46. It noted with concern that the term "within existing resources" had been used by other Main Committees of the General Assembly and by the plenary Assembly and recalled rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly as well as General Assembly resolution 45/248, which reaffirmed that the Fifth Committee was the appropriate Main Committee of the General Assembly entrusted with responsibility for administrative and budgetary matters. Previous Chairmen had reminded other Committees of that rule and of the mandate of the Fifth Committee. It was unclear why the Advisory Committee, for its part, had not done so in all instances in its reports. Rather, it had appeared in some instances to use the phrase "within existing resources" to convey a decision by the General Assembly as to how resources should be used. That was clearly a decision which only the Fifth Committee could take.

47. Regarding the Peacebuilding Commission, her delegation stood ready to find practical solutions to the request by the Secretary-General to establish a small peacebuilding support office. It was not convinced, however, by the reasoning behind the Advisory Committee's recommendation that there should be no additional appropriation for the support office. The matter should be given further consideration to permit both the Commission and the Office to function from the very beginning.

48. Her delegation appreciated the constructive approach taken by the Government of Ethiopia to fulfil its obligations as host country to ECA. It was therefore concerned at the delays in construction. While she understood the reasons for the delays, including the need to address safety concerns, it was now time to implement the project without further delay. Her delegation therefore supported the request for additional resources.

49. **Ms. Barbosa Fernández** (Mexico) said that the work done by the Director of INSTRAW had shown what could be achieved by good management. One year was not sufficient to overcome the obstacles that INSTRAW was facing. The Institute therefore required the support of the General Assembly as it underwent a process of revitalization.

50. **Ms. Kuroda** (Japan) said that her delegation had a clear position on the programme budget implications. In order to save time, however, it would not make a statement but would be participating actively and constructively in the informal consultations.

51. **Mr. Debabeche** (Algeria) expressed concern at the recurring late issuance of documentation. The General Assembly should provide INSTRAW, which was headed by a highly capable Director, with the necessary resources for its revitalization and reorganization. His delegation was also concerned at the delays in the construction of the additional facilities at ECA. It associated itself with the statement by South Africa on the Peacebuilding Commission.

52. **Ms. Buergo Rodríguez** (Cuba) said that the work of INSTRAW and the role played by its Director reinforced the need for the General Assembly to appropriate the additional resources to finance the Institute for the biennium 2006-2007. She agreed with the statement by South Africa on the need to recall the Committee's mandate to the attention of the other Main Committees and to avoid the phrase "within existing resources". Her delegation was also concerned at the late issuance of documents, which did not allow delegations the necessary time to examine important issues.

53. **Ms. Udo** (Nigeria) associated her delegation with the statement by Argentina on behalf of the Rio Group concerning INSTRAW. With respect to the construction of additional office space for ECA, there should be no further delays and she would welcome a time line for its completion. She supported the comments made by South Africa concerning the need for other Main Committees to refrain from encroaching on the mandate of the Fifth Committee. Lastly, her delegation attached importance to the Peacebuilding Commission and would be approaching negotiations on it in a positive manner.

54. **Ms. Van Buerle** (Director ad interim of the Programme Planning and Budget Division), said with reference to the construction of additional office space for ECA that the Office of Legal Affairs was conducting a final review with the Government of Ethiopia regarding the land agreement and that a few issues still needed to be ironed out. Questions pertaining to entitlement rights, the minerals below the land and the interpretation of public interest with respect to the land were still being considered by the Office. In paragraphs 5 to 9 of his report (A/60/532), the Secretary-General noted that the geotechnical report had uncovered atypical soil conditions in sections of the foundation area of the new building, requiring the reinforcement of the building foundation. Substantial work had therefore been required to re-evaluate the foundations and the designs for the construction, which had accounted for some of the delays. She would provide information on the anticipated time line in the informal consultations.

55. With respect to the concerns expressed over the phrase "within existing resources", each time an oral statement or document on programme budget implications was produced for the Main Committees, the Secretariat consistently ensured that the terms of General Assembly resolution 45/248 were brought to the attention of those Committees and their Secretaries and that the rights of the Fifth Committee were respected.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.